REGISTER OF
CLASSIFICATION DECISIONS

Date of entry in Register:	20 April 1999
Name of applicant/court:	Susan Monica Torlesse
Applicant to the Labelling Body:	Not Applicable
Title of Publication:	Untitled
Other Known Titles:	Not Stated
Director:	Not Applicable
Producer:	Not Applicable
Publisher:	Not Applicable
Author:	Not Applicable
Format:	Photograph
Country of Origin:	New Zealand
Language:	Not Applicable

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Components of film originally examined: Not Applicable.

Feature:	Running time:
Trailers:	Running time:
	Total Running time:

Excision/Alteration: Not Applicable.

Reason(s) for Excision:

Not Applicable.

Classification Decision:

Unrestricted.

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Display Conditions:

Not Applicable.

Descriptive Note:

Not Applicable.

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Direction to issue a label has been given on: Not Applicable.

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SUMMARY OF THE REASONS FOR DECISION:

The untitled photograph is classified as:
Unrestricted.

The colour photograph measures approximately 10 cm wide by 15 cm high. The photograph is one of two prints of the same image submitted for classification, one of a total of 35 photographs submitted together. The image depicts a naked girl 8 to 10 years of age standing in front of fringed Jewish ritual garments known as *tallitot* attached to the flat surface behind her. She is viewed from above her head to just above her pubic area. The black leather straps of Jewish religious phylacteries known as *tefillin* are wrapped twice around her torso, loosely around her upper right arm, and draped down the front of her body. One box of the *tefillin* is attached to her arm, the other rests against her chest, supported slightly by her hand. The girl's expression is relaxed, however she looks down as if attentive to the attachment on her arm. The image presents as fully contrived by the photographer.

The Classification Office consulted with an expert on Judaism and made extensive use of recently published reference works on Judaism. The owner-photographer's written submission on these publications has been given significant weighting in coming to a determination on this photograph.

The photograph is intended to be used by the owner for artistic purposes. The image is of the photographer's own child. The evidence provided by the owner and the applicant when submitting the publications consistently points to the owner's interest in and artistic exploration of traditional and contemporary practices and issues in Judaism, issues of interest to feminists, and issues arising from the intersection of Judaism and feminism. The image embodies a number of meanings with complex relationships that are specific to Judaism, referring to subjects including the position of women in contemporary Jewish society, particularly in relation to central religious obligations. The manner in which those meanings have been organised in the image might be considered to be somewhat confrontational and challenging, particularly for Jewish viewers who would be more likely to understand those meanings, however this appears to be the photographer's intent and consistent with much contemporary artistic guiding philosophy.

The photograph may have some merit and value in relation to social and cultural matters. As a statement or exploration of Judaism and feminism the image contributes to representation of a community relatively marginalised in New Zealand society. In addition, issues such as the image raises appear to be subject to ongoing discussion and debate at least in Reform congregations, if not also Orthodox, within contemporary New Zealand Jewry.

Since the photograph is classified as unrestricted, no limit has been imposed on the freedom of expression affirmed in s14 of the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990.

OFLC Ref: 9801307